



A structural model for relationship between dimensions of emotional intelligence, conflict management and job performance of the staff (Case study: Ilam Gas Refinement Corporation)

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted with the aim of testing a model of relations between emotional intelligence and job performance of the staff with the intermediacy of conflicts management. The methodology was one of descriptive-structural equations. The sample under research included 155 people of the Ilam Gas Refinement Corporation who were selected by using classified sampling method from among 253 official personnel. The tool for collecting data was a questionnaire. To analyze data, descriptive statistics and structural equations methods were applied. The findings resulting from the fitness of the structural model indicated that there was a positive and significant effect among the variables in the research. Also, the intermediary role of the conflict management in the research's conceptual model in respect to the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance of the staff (non-verbal communications) was confirmed.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence; Conflict management; Job performance; Ilam Gas Refinement Corporation; Structural equations

1. INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence is a string of verbal and non-verbal abilities that would allow the individual to deal with expression, identification, realization and evaluation of his own feelings and those of others in order to getting along with demands and social pressures. People with higher emotional intelligence are able to identify some certain emotions and sensations in them and others and make use of them in direction of guiding conducts and thoughts of the others. Emotional intelligence helps them to control their sensations and emotions and manage those of others (Goleman et al, 2002). On the other hand, conflict in many organizations has manifested as a serious issue that could be useful and destructive. Conflict could leave adverse effects on the performance of the organizations and bring about conditions in which organizations will lose their own resources in as much as it results in the winding down of the organization. Conflict, also could entail helpful effects and cause creativity, innovation and productivity of the human work force (Sobhani Nejad and Youz Bashi, 2008). Therefore, instead of denying and dealing with conflict, we need to seek solutions to make out what conflict is and apply these conflicts for orienting relations and accomplishing the goals better (Handy, 2001).

However, we need skills for conflict management where these skills are found to be sensually based and assume determining role in regard to the results of the conflicting situations. It is noteworthy, these conflicts cannot be effectively and creatively solved without management of feelings and it is inly through controlling of feelings and senses that conflicts and contradictions would lead to higher productivity (Farzad Nia, 2011). Thus, as scholars' researches have pointed out, emotional intelligence will be able to assist managers in choosing the best styles for conflict management in other words, there is a significant relationship between strategies of conflicts management and emotional intelligence (Pouya, 2013). From another perspective, researchers maintain that conflicts management strategies are found to be positively and strongly related with job performance of the staff. To better understand the situation, one can improve job performance of the staff by choosing the better style for managing the conflict (Mba Okechukwu Agwu, 2013).

Hence, in accordance with the material stated, one has to admit that one of the methods for improving staff's job performance at the time conflict emerges, it to apply an appropriate strategy for dealing with this subject matter where this could be done through higher emotional intelligence. Given the fact that no relevant material was found in studying the literature and theoretical framework of this research, hence in line with explaining the position of conflict management strategies in the Ilam Gas Refinement Corporation, emotional intelligence was observed as an effective factor on conflict management strategies and the job performance was thought of an influencing factor from among conflict management strategies. The work also addresses the intermediacy role of conflict management in relation with the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance of then staff. Thus, given the above, the current work aims to test structural model for relationship between dimensions of emotional intelligence, conflict management and job performance of the staff (Case study: Ilam Gas Refinement Corporation).

Up to now, many researches have been performed in respect to the relationship between emotional intelligence and staffs' job performance in organizations and their results have suggested the existence of strong correlation between these two variables (Noorazzila and Abdul Rahman, 2013). In some other researches, the relationship between conflict

management strategies and staffs' job performance was confirmed (Mba Okechukwu Agwu, 2013). However, in the mentioned researches, some of the non-evident intermediacy variables in this relationship were not observed. In other words, variables which were assumed to be affecting both directly and indirectly the relationship between the two variables of emotional intelligence and job performance and could have intermediacy role have not been under close attention. Given the above, we can find out that conflict management strategies could be applied as the intermediacy role and through this variable, one can create modifications in the relationships between the two variables of emotional intelligence and staffs' job performance.

Goleman considers emotional intelligence as an essential element for the success of an individual in life and work in the challenging social situation. He states emotional intelligence results in empowerment of people in addressing high stress and sharp challenges related with social growth and perceptual growth (Goleman, 1998).

Emotional intelligence is referred to peoples' capacity for discerning their own sensations and those of others which would allow them to create motivations among them so that they can manage their own feelings in relations with others. Emotional intelligence serves much quicker than an intellectual mind. This mind, without making delays for a bit to investigate the potential act proceeds and in fact shows some sort of intrinsic reaction. In fact, the distinction point between an emotional mind and an intellectual mind could be considered as the speed of act. While analyzing these two minds, one has to bear in mind that an emotional mind sacrifices accuracy for speed through speedy perceptions, because it is based on primary and intrinsic impressions which have situated in the mind and originates from the first experience (Khajeyan and A'azami, 2010). Various and relatively different classifications have been considered for dimensions of emotional intelligence. In one of the most credible classifications, Goleman and his colleagues have expressed components if the emotional intelligence as follows:

a) Self-awareness

Self-awareness or determination of feeling at the same time that is taking place constitutes a major part of emotional intelligence. The ability to control and manage of feelings momentarily indicates understanding of the self and involves some psychological insight.

b) Self-adjustment(control)

Control and management of feelings is a skill which is formed based on self-awareness.

c) Self-motivation

Directing feelings in line with a certain goal for concentration and creation of motivation is important.

d) Empathy

Ability formed based on self-awareness. It is through empathy with others which is assumed a sort of popular skill.

e) Social skills

The art of establishing communications with others will largely contain skills of controlling and managing others' feelings

Conflict management strategies

Within the development trend of schools of thoughts of management, there are three fundamental theories regarding conflict. In the traditional viewpoint, conflict is absolutely adverse and needs to be avoided. In the viewpoint of human relations conflict is an indispensable affair; hence it should be minimized and be optimized. With respect to the interaction perspective, not all conflicts are bad. Conflicts of high or low levels will reduce performance and are considered to be ineffective. However, conflict with appropriate level could be useful. Existence of a favorable level of conflict could result in dynamism, creativity, and self-criticism of the organization (Alhuseini, 2001). To minimize the destructive effects of conflict and using it as a constructive force, it has to be effectively managed and in relation to conditions, one has to adopt an appropriate strategy. In a classification, Ponetham and Wilson have identified five styles for resolving conflict. They have elaborated these five styles into three strategies as follow:

a) Non-counteracting strategy:

It contains avoidance and matching (reconciliation) styles. This strategy is used when there is a problem but the subject matter is not so important.

b) Solution-oriented strategy:

This is a state where people show good morale of cooperation and that they are determined to reach their own wills; i.e. the parties' strategy is win-win.

c) Control strategy:

This strategy is once formed when both parties are determined to reach their wants and they have no morale of cooperation together.

Staffs' job performance

Performance could be considered as the results acquired and individually, performance refers to the history of one person's successes (Armstrong, 2007). However, job performance means that which the individual does and is observable and involves that category of activities which are related with the objectives of the organization and hence they can be measured in the specialized idioms of any individual (Munchinsky, 2000). In other words, job performance means knowledge and ability in performing special duties whose necessity involves proficiency in application of special techniques and tools as well as practical merit in conducts and activities (Sa'atchi et al, 2013).

Results by Joanne et al, with the title of relationship of conflict management styles, emotional intelligence and personality theories among nursing students of the University of Hong Kong implicated that emotional intelligence was found to be meaningfully related with each of the five conflict management styles (integration, reinforcement, reconciliation, dominance and avoidance) such that students with higher emotional intelligence use compromise, reinforcement and dominance styles while students with lower emotional intelligence apply the avoidance style less. Meantime, implicit theories of personality are only related with the compromise style (Chan et al, 2014).

Results by Nural Ain (2010) demonstrated that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management styles. On the one hand, superintendent despite the fact they have the highest rate of empathy they have the lowest

self-adjustment rate. Meanwhile, from among other findings of the study by him, we can refer to the issue that the inferior, in case conflicts arise will apply integration and compromise styles along with their superintendents while the dominance style is least applied (Nural Ain, 2010). Results by Foroughi pour (2014) demonstrated that there is a positive relationship between a part of control of stress related with emotional intelligence and control style of conflict management, between part of individual skill of emotional intelligence and resolution oriented style of conflict management and between part of emotional intelligence interpersonal skill and avoidance skill of conflict management within then statistical population under study (Lorestan Sports Organization).

Pouya's results (2013) with the subject of relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management styles in the Golestan's Gas Corporation indicated that there is a negative correlation between emotional intelligence and resolution oriented styles and non-countering styles regarding conflict management while there is no significant relationship between the emotional intelligence and control style being one of the conflict management styles. Results by Noorazzila and Abdulrahman research with the subject matter of the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance of the Telecommunication Center Agencies addresses the relationship between these two variables among 118 respondents of the telephone centers in the city of Kuala Lumpur in the country of Malaysia where the findings revealed that there is a relationship between the emotional intelligence and job performance, however, the relationship between the emotional self being of parts of emotional intelligence with the job performance was not confirmed. Meantime, two other dimensions of it, i.e. self-adjustment and using emotions were confirmed while the gender-intermediating role was not confirmed over this relationship.

Results by Golparvar and Khaksar (2010) titled as the relationship between emotional intelligence job performances among staffs at Industrial Towns Factories of Moorsche Khort, Isfahan city implicated that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance of the staff while from among correlation coefficient of Bar-on emotional intelligence components and general job performance, the job performance (also of Bar-on emotional intelligence components) did have the highest correlation rate with self-esteem (0.409) and it had the lowest correlation rate (0.203) with a flexibility (also of Bar-on emotional intelligence components). Results by Mba Okechukwu Agwu (2013) indicated that there is a significant relationship between conflict management strategies and staffs' job performance while there is no discrepancy between managing and non-managing staffs' perceptions and effectiveness of conflict management strategies. Results by Cherami research (2013) with the subject matter of investigating the fivefold relations of conflict resolution and staffs' job performance demonstrated that from among fivefold styles of conflict resolution, compromise styles and competition are positively and significantly related with job performance. In addition to that, regression analysis results indicated that there is a multiple correlation between conflict resolution styles and job performance. Meantime, with respect to conflict resolution style, compromise has the highest role in explaining the job performance (Cherami, 2013).

Research conceptual framework

Given the researches and studies conducted as well as independent and dependent variables in the research, the theoretical framework could be presented as the following figure (1). This model of emotional intelligence has been considered as the independent variable

while the conflict management and job performance have been thought of intermediary and dependent variables respectively.

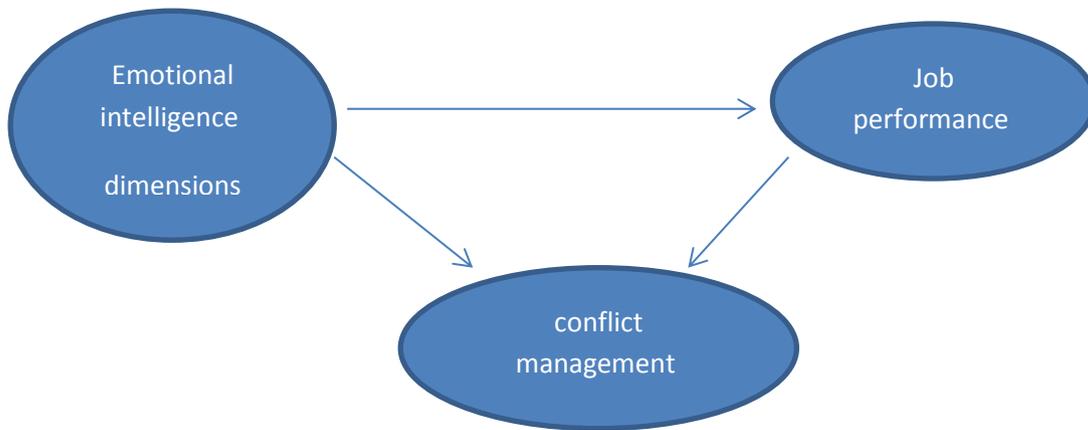


Figure 1. Research theoretical framework.

Table 1. Research conceptual framework.

Primary conceptual model (fundamental)	Primary model variables	Elaboration	Conclusion	Secondary conceptual model (researcher made)	Secondary model variables
Effects of emotional intelligence and conflict management	*independent variables: emotional intelligence	Meyer and Salovey (1997): A model for understanding emotional growth containing 4 components of perceptions, homogeneity, understanding and management	Emotional intelligence affects conflict management (Pouya, 2013)	According to the results upon which effects of emotional intelligence has been explained on conflict management and given the findings where effects of conflict management has been explained on job performance and given the results stating the effects of emotional intelligence on job performance, in this article, the role effect of emotional intelligence has been addressed.	Independent variable: emotional intelligence Dimensions: Self-awareness Self-adjustment Self-motivation Empathy Social skills
	*Dependent variables	Conflict management is a phenomenon with positive and negative effects on staffs' performance and that of the organization (Rahim, 2002).			
	Conflict management	Conflict attendant to job could assist in creativity, innovation and effectiveness of change in the organization and consequently the managers in reaching their goals			
Effects of conflict management on job	*Independent variable: conflict management	Conflict is a necessity and a useful part of the life of each organization whose aim is cooperation not separation (Mba Okechukwu	Effectiveness of management strategies for		

performance	Dependent variable	Agwu, 2013). Outcomes of the industrial staffs' performance usually has a role in minimizing humans- speed, machinery-hours and improving outlets, personal skills and morals of the staff as well as the prestige of the organization (Mba Okechukwu Agwu, 2013).	conflicts on job performance of the staffs (Mba Okechukwu Agwu, 2013)		Intermediary variable: Conflict management
Effects of emotional intelligene	Independent variable	Goleman (2000): introduction of a model for emotional intelligence with four components of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and communication management	Existence of correlation between emotional intelligence and job performance of the staff (Noorazzila and Abdul Rahman, 2013).		
	Dependent variable	Job performance is considered a major structure in organizational practices and plays an important role in decision making of most staffs (Scullen et al, 2000).			

Hypotheses: Given the theoretical framework, research hypotheses are as follow where the components of emotional intelligence directly affect staffs' job performance and indirectly affect staffs' job performance along with conflict management strategies. In other words:

- Components of emotional intelligence (Self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, empathy and social skills) directly affect job performance of the staff meaningfully.
- Components of emotional intelligence (Self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, empathy and social skills) indirectly affect job performance of the staff meaningfully through conflict management strategies.

2. METHODOLOGY

This research was an applied form in terms of goal and in terms of nature, it fell under the correlation-decsriptive category of structural equations modeling. The statistical population of this study included all working official staff at the Ilam Gas Refinement Corporation which amounted to 253 people. To collect the information, the relevant classified random sampling method was applied such that firstly, all staffs were classified based on units they were engaged in activities a d thereafter, given the ratio of staffs of each unit to all the staffs of the population under study, sampling was applied. To determine the sample size, the Cochran formula was used for the limited population where in accordance with this formula, the sample size was obtained to be 155 people. To analyze the study, the questionnaire of the research including three main variables of emotional intelligence, conflict management strategies and staffs' job performance was applied where they were measured

with a set of measurement variables. In total, three questionnaires of Sheering emotional intelligence, that of Pathenam conflict management and that of Patterson job performance were applied. They were designed based on the five value Liker scale. In this research, in order to measure the reliability of the questions, a primary sample of 30 questionnaires was pretested and then by using the data acquired from the questionnaire, information through Cronbach's alpha was analyzed by the SPSS 21 software. Reliability coefficients indicate good reliability rates.

Table 2. Number of questions and dimensions of the questionnaire along with the Cronbach's alpha coefficients.

Variable	No. questions	Cronbach's coefficient	Total coefficient
Self-awareness	5	0/816	0/822
Self-control	5	0/802	
Empathy	5	0/843	
Self-motivation	5	0/847	
Social skills	5	0/805	
Conflict management	5	0/861	0/861
Job performance	5	0/856	0/856

3. RESULT

The statistical sample of the research amounted to be 152 people, however since it was assumed the return rate to be less than 100%, hence to resolve this problem, as many as 170 questionnaires were distributed among the people of the population. After examining the questionnaires, as many as 155 questionnaires were analyzed were their descriptive statistics as follow:

Table 3. Demographic information of the staff (sample of 155 people).

Variable	Levels	Frequency	Variables	Levels	Frequency
Age	Under 25	1	Education	Diploma	8
	25-35	80		College level	13
	36-45	60		B.A.	111

				M.A	23
	45plus	14			
Marriage	Single	10	Years of service	14 years and lower	140
	Married	145		Over 14 years	15

Examining the model and research hypotheses

To test research hypotheses, factorial analysis by the Liserl software was applied. In the following, the model while estimating standard (β standard coefficients) and significant coefficients (t-value) has been indicated. To judge the significance of the relationship between the two variables is as such: If the absolute value of a significant number (t-value) between two variables is greater than 1.96, the relationship between the two variables becomes significant. Also, given the standard estimation coefficient (β), the degree to which variables affect each other will be investigated.

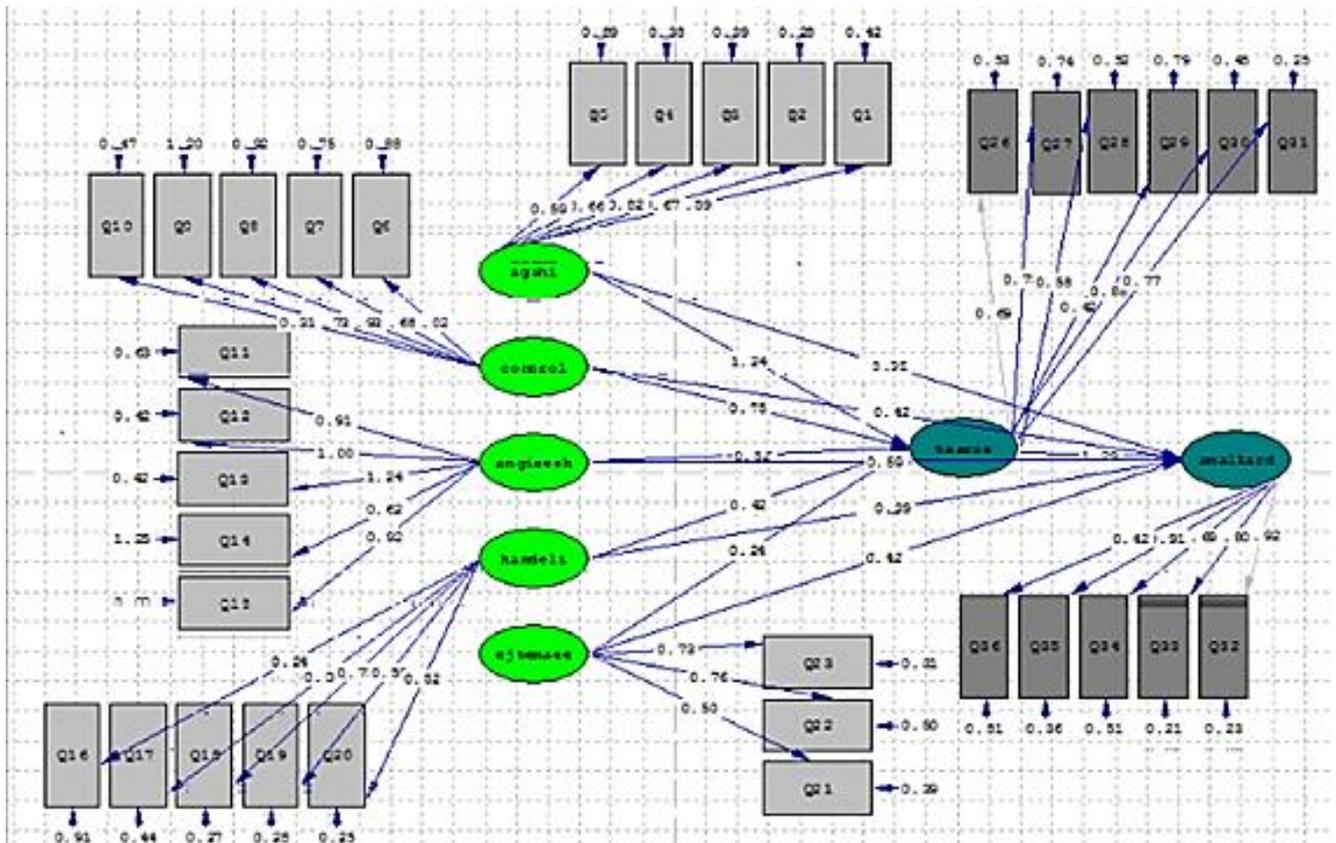


Figure 2. Modeling of structural equations (β standard estimation).

Error of Approximation)		
NFI (Normed Fir Index)	>0.90	0.97
NNFI (Non-Normed Fit Index)	>0.90	1.00

Direction	Direct effects		Indirect effects (through conflict management)		Total effect		Researcher hypothesis (H ₁)
	β	t-value	β	t-vale	β	t-vale	Rejection or non-rejection
Self-awareness_ job performance	0/91	4/37	(1/24)*(1/29)	(4/79)*(3/03)	2/50	18/88	Non-rejection
Self-control _ job performance	0/42	6/59	(0/75)*(1/29)	(2/68)*(3/03)	1/38	14/71	Non-rejection
Self-motivation_ job performance	0/59	5/71	(0/52)*(1/29)	(5/24)*(3/03)	1/26	21/58	Non-rejection
Empathy _ job performance	0/39	5/52	(0/42)*(1/29)	(4/55)*(3/03)	0/93	19/3	Non-rejection
Social skills_ job performance	0/42	4/65	(0/24)*(1/29)	(2/45)*(3/03)	0/72	12/07	Non-rejection

As seen from Figures (2, 3), the significance between dimensions of emotional intelligence with job performance are all greater than 1/96; thus, the effectiveness of dimensions of emotional intelligence on staffs' job performance is confirmed.

Also, because the coefficients of the effects between the dimensions of emotional intelligence with job performance are all positive, thus self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, empathy and social skills have positive and meaningful effects on the staffs' job performance.

Also, since the significance number between the dimensions of emotional intelligence with conflict management are all greater than 1/96, thus the effectiveness of dimensions of emotional intelligence is confirmed on the conflict management. Also, because coefficients of the effects between these dimensions under question have all become positive along with conflict management thus, self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, empathy and social skills have positive and meaningful effects on the conflicts management. On the other hand, because the significance value of conflict management with job performance is greater than

1/96 and the coefficient of the effects between these two variables has become positive thus, conflict management leaves meaningful and positive effects on staffs' job performance.

Therefore, the intermediacy role of conflict management on effectiveness of self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, empathy and social skills is confirmed. Therefore, dimensions of emotional Intelligence, i.e. self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, empathy and social skills directly affect job performance of the staff and this effect is meaningful. So, the first research hypothesis is supported (non-rejection). On the other hand, dimensions of emotional Intelligence, i.e. self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, empathy and social skills indirectly affect job performance of the staff through conflict management and hence the second research hypothesis is confirmed (non-rejection).

4. CONCLUSIONS

The main goal of this research was to explain the effects of the dimensions of emotional intelligence on the job performance of the staff at the Gas Refinement Corporation. The Liserl findings revealed that dimensions of emotional intelligence, i.e. self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, empathy and social skills affect positively and meaningful the job performance of the staff through conflict management. Because, to minimize destructive effects if conflicts and using it as a constructive force, it has to be managed so effectively that appropriate measures are adopted.

Thus, existence of strong emotional intelligence dimensions among personnel will help them choose an appropriate strategy from among strategies for resolving conflict. Therefore, it can be inferred that higher emotional intelligence dimensions could promise higher job performance among staff.

These results are in line with expectations of Mohsen Golparvar and His colleagues however, they are in disconformity with those of Noorazzila who were arguing direct disconnection of self-adjustment and job performance. Meanwhile, conflict management could modify the effects of independent variables (dimensions of emotional intelligence) on the staffs' job performance. In the end, we refer to some recommendations based on the findings of the research.

Managers are advised to learn emotional skills while learning technical education and skills so that they can reach better staffs' job performance. This will help them understand each other better and seek their shared goals. While understanding dimensions of emotional intelligence, managers will learn how to resolve the conflicts and to improve their job performance.

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